



I am ready to succeed.

ARIZONA STATE BOARD ON SCHOOL READINESS
GOVERNOR'S OFFICE FOR CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES
602-542-3620, <http://gocyf.az.gov/sr>
1700 W. WASHINGTON, SUITE 101, PHOENIX, ARIZONA 85007



Early Childhood Health Screening

Safe and Healthy - Key Components of School Readiness:

Parents help their children to be healthy and ready to succeed by taking them to the doctor for well-child visits. Well-child visits build a trusting relationship between family and practitioner and help parents know what to expect from their developing child. Children with an undiagnosed health or developmental problem will not be ready to optimally learn when they start school. Health and developmental problems can be overcome with early recognition and treatment so that children can succeed in school and in life.

Early Childhood Health Screens:

Children between 18 months and 6 years should have a well-child visit with a pediatrician or family practice physician at least once a year, more frequently from birth to 18 months. This visit allows the physician to screen the child for problems related to vision, hearing, behavioral health, normal development, nutritional status, oral health, immunizations, blood lead levels and other physical health indicators, and then treat or refer children with identified problems for appropriate intervention. At this visit, the physician also provides guidance to parents about the child's upcoming developmental growth and tips to develop a positive child-parent relationship.

The AHCCCS Early Periodic Screening Diagnosis and Treatment (EPSDT) program has a Periodicity Schedule that dictates when each visit should occur (from birth through age 20 years) and which tests and screens should be done and which immunizations should be given.

Screening and assessment by trained professionals (physicians and nurses) will identify children needing early intervention services to help them develop to their fullest potential. Babies who begin the first 72 hours of life in the Newborn Intensive Care Unit (NICU) are at greater risk for developmental delays. All newborns should be screened at birth and then according to the EPSDT Periodicity Schedule (8 visits by age 1).

Babies should have an oral health screen as soon as teeth erupt and young children should see a dentist every six months. Care of "baby" or primary teeth affects the future health of permanent teeth as well as reduces incidence of ear infections and other early childhood health problems.

Next Steps for Arizona:

Increasing the number of children who receive comprehensive well-child health screens requires multiple efforts. The State School Readiness Board (SRB) is working with community groups on a public education campaign to impress on parents the value of health screening. The SRB is working with AHCCCS and the Health Plans to increase the number of children who are screened and appropriately treated for developmental delays, and supporting training for child care staff to screen for children's oral health needs.

Since a large portion of young children are in child care each week, child care settings are an ideal place to promote health education and screening. To provide child care providers and preschools with access to health professionals, a statewide health consultation system will be phased-in beginning in 2005. See the Fact Sheet on Healthy Child Care Arizona.

For more information contact:

Mary Warren, Ph.D., State School Readiness Board, mwarren@az.gov or 602-364-2240

7/21/2005